

**COUNCIL ON  
AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES  
Meeting Minutes**

**August 9, 2002  
Alaska Building, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Seattle, WA 98104**

**ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Present:** Marc Avni, Gabe Cohen, Thelma Coney, Cleo Corcoran, Timmie Faghin, Lee Gaylor, John Kennedy, Mae Shields, Karen Sluiter, Greg Stack, Helen Spencer, Larry Verhei, Lisa Yeager, Fred Yee

**Absent:** Martha Becker, Pat Carroll, Steve Colwell, Suzanne Gehring, John Holecek, Will Parry

**Excused:** Juanita Grant, Randy, Hayhurst, Suzanne Wiley

**Guests:** Marianne LoGerfo, Nancy Meltzer, Viet Shelton, Sandy Stutey, Linda Weedman, Catharine Wu,

**STAFF:** Margaret Casey, Rosemary Cunningham, Peggy O'Brien-Murphy, Pam Piering, Allison Ruff, Ken Shulman, Linda Wells, Linda Woodall, Karen Winston

**Minutes**

**Karen Sluiter**, Chair, convened the meeting at 12:00 p.m. The minutes of June 14, and July 12, 2002 were approved.

**Program:  
Housing Levy Update**

**Linda Weedman**, Senior Program Director of YWCA Works, at the request of the Advisory Council, gave a review of the Seattle Housing Levy that will be on the September ballot. Linda said people are interested in what the levy will cost the typical homeowner. The present levy is \$34 a year. The renewal levy will cost \$49 a year (an increase of about \$1.00 a month). Linda passed around an information sheet with specifics on where the money will go and the target population - 91% of the money will assist renters, and over 50% will go to families with extremely low incomes. For the levy to pass, 51% of the vote is required (roughly 123,000 votes). The most consistent voters are senior citizens, who are expected to be largely absentee voters. Advisory Council members were encouraged to read the summary information and make an independent decision.

**Greg Stack**, AC representative on the Housing Levy Oversight Committee, also gave a brief overview. Because many seniors have low, fixed incomes, housing is very important to our constituent group. Greg emphasized that through this committee, the AC has an influence on directing levy funds and making sure they are responsive to the needs of our constituency. When the current levy expires, a new oversight committee will be appointed by the Mayor, which will include a member of AC. Because this is his last term on the Council, Greg asked the Council to start thinking about a replacement for his position on the committee.

Greg also gave a brief update on the next steps of Universal Design. As part of the charter, the group is looking at how to improve housing for both the aging and the disability population. Presentations have already been made to the City Council and, in November, there will be a seminar on Universal Design for the design community. The group has also requested that the American Institute of Architects consider giving educational credits for the seminar. Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck, who remains a member of the AC until the end of 2002, has also been very helpful in promoting this issue. **Marc Avni** suggested that the Design Program at Bellevue Community College also be contacted about the seminar. **Allison Ruff** will follow up on the suggestion.

**Panel on Area Plan and Update on Transportation Issues:**

**Marianne LoGerfo**, Director of the Northshore Senior Center in Bothell, discussed how they handled transportation problems in a two-county area that serves older adults in north King & South Snohomish County. They serve 8,000 people per year (through the senior center, two adult day health programs and some branch centers), providing 24,000 rides per year, using 15 vans, 9 paid drivers and 15 volunteer drivers. Marianne became directly involved in transportation issues in 1993 when it was decided that Metro and Community Transit would no longer cross the county lines with their van transportation programs. The Senior Center was seriously affected because 1/3 of their clients lived in Snohomish Co and 2/3 lived in King. Until 1993, Hope Link, had been providing their transportation, but as a King County Eastside program, the vans could no longer operate in Snohomish. A collaboration with several agencies was soon formed. Hope Link, along with the State Department of Transportation, provided (wheelchair accessible) vans, the City of Bothell provided block grant funds, and Northshore developed a transportation program for clients. Now, partnered with other groups, they have expanded further - providing Medicaid transportation trips taking people to kidney dialysis, medical appointments, hospitals, or wherever they need to go. Today they are jointly sponsored by Hope Link for Medicaid transportation and by Metro for the American with Disabilities (ADA) ACCESS. They also work with Community Transit in Snohomish Co and with Long Term Care and Aging in Snohomish County Medicaid. (The latter is a formal program for ADA eligible clients going to Medicaid appointments, or for those who have a disability, which prevents them from taking the ordinary bus.)

Northshore had also acquired a fleet of used vans, driven by volunteers, which increases access to social and health services. They also help adult family homes get clients “out and about” – whether to the doctor or just for an outing. Marianne said this support to adult family homes has had a very positive effect, increasing people’s ability to stay in the homes. Results have also shown that caregivers remain longer at the homes. Trained, caring drivers have come to know and love their passengers. They are as valuable a part of the day as the nurse, social worker, and activity coordinator. These drivers get to see directly how people are treated in the home, what the hygiene is like – they are an extra pair of eyes, and sharing this information is another way to advocate for the home residents.

**Sandy Stutey**, Director of KC Metro’s Accessibility Services, gave a transportation perspective from the large provider. Originally a municipal corporation transit authority, Metro became a part of the King County Department of Transportation through a merger 8 years ago. Although policies and governance issues dramatically changed, the merger has brought broad support throughout the county. Their primary “product” is the fixed route service: 240 routes, 9,000 bus shelters, and 100 million trips per year. All buses are low floor or equipped with wheelchair lifts. TTY rider information is available. A ride-share program has 680 vanpools that move commuters through the region and is the largest program in the US. A Ride-Share component also matches (700) people for ridesharing in individual private cars, gathering information on where they live and where they want to go. Flex Car (a membership carsharing) is another program sponsored by Metro. Cars are stationed in different areas and can be signed out by members for shopping, errands or recreation, without the ownership hassles of parking, insurance, maintenance, gasoline, etc. Metro also has a \$400,000 grant to support special needs transportation for job seekers (people moving from welfare to work programs). A federally mandated, complementary para transit program – ACCESS (an advanced reservation program) has 287 vans that provide service similar to the fixed route busses. ACCESS has a \$33 million budget, providing one million rides per year. Over 12,000 people use the system on an annual basis at a cost of \$30 per trip. Sandy said the average cost for the program to transport a person to/from work, 4 days a week, is \$15,000 per year. Because the cost per trip on fixed route bus is only \$3, Metro is looking at ways to assist riders with disabilities in using the regular bus system. A bus travel training program for people with

developmental disabilities teaches about 100 + people per year how to use the regular bus system. A database maintains (and adjusts, as needs change) these special travel requirements.

Metro also has a Taxi Subsidy Program, authorized in the 1980's, for people earning no more than 70% of the state mean income. They can purchase \$60 of script for \$30. It's very helpful for medical emergencies.

Sandy also discussed several collaborative efforts. In 1999, KC started funding a community partnership program, (funded today at \$650,000). Working with Senior Services, they placed several retired Metro vans into the community. The Des Moines Senior Shuttle started with these vans. Senior Services of KC now has 5 vans, and provides similar shuttle programs. Metro maintains the vans, provides driver training, emergency road assistance, and technical support. The Senior Services volunteer driver program is housed at Metro and uses the Metro computer and telephone system for intake information, assignment of trips, and driver recruiting. They have 350 volunteers throughout the county. (Some vanpools even come over the mountains daily from Lake Chelan). Vashon Island lost their Sunday ACCESS service because the fixed route bus no longer operated on Vashon. So, Metro and the Vashon Community Center negotiated an arrangement where Metro provided a van and the center provided drivers to get people to different areas around the island.

**Margaret Casey** spoke briefly about aging and mobility as two very important issues today. She noted that we live longer than we can drive, but fortunately, there is life after driving. Although there is data that indicates people will not give up their cars, Margaret challenges such data and ventures that people will give up their cars if they don't have to give up their independence and/or power of mobility. Having to rely on a friend or relative to do what you want to do is very different from being able to independently attend to your own needs. Last spring, when attending the first annual Aging & Mobility Conference, Margaret said she realized that King County is on the cutting edge with special transportation issues because we have transportation and social service people talking, working and planning together. Our job at ADS is to bring the right people together, from service and transportation agencies, for planning and forging partnerships. We need to enhance existing programs and develop new ideas for improving transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. Mobility, she noted, means more than just buses. No one entity can solve our transportation problems alone. Planning together we can make a difference. Margaret invited everyone to an important meeting between major transportation and social service providers and policy makers. It takes place on Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 11am – 1 pm, at the Puget Sound Council of Regional Governments, 1011 Western Ave, Suite 500. A speaker funded by the National Transportation Institute will describe a model she has developed for transportation "on demand" for seniors (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

**Gabe** asked how Referendum 51 would impact these issues of transportation? Sandy said the state has a \$3 million dollar program that targets rural population centers. If Ref 51 passes, the money will grow to \$72 million over 5 biennia. This will mean a larger commitment to the rural mobility program. Also included in Ref 51 is a new category of funding for para transit service for people with special needs who, because of age, disability or income, are unable to provide or purchase transportation for themselves. Because this money is based on tax revenues, implementation will depend on if/when the revenues come in.

**Lisa Yeager** expressed frustration that ACCESS vans can't go beyond two miles off the fixed bus routes. Many people are isolated because of this. She spoke of a woman who needs to go for kidney dialysis but, because she lives ½ mile off the limit, the transportation systems are not available to her. **Marc** pointed out that people who don't live near the rural routes are also KC residents and pay taxes for systems to which they have no access. Sandy said a line had to be drawn and that the service area is based on the Federal statute. Metro is required to provide complementary para transit on a radius of ¾ mile on either side of any fixed route service. Because of rural areas on the Eastside, the County Council authorized an additional ¾ of a mile. It's an issue of population centers she said. The lower the density the higher the cost to deliver the service. This is why housing and transportation are so closely linked – especially in the special needs

population. Unfortunately, affordable housing is being pushed away from central service centers. Sandy agrees we must get partners to the table to find ways to mutually support one another.

**Marc** mentioned the Bush administration New Freedoms Initiative (<http://www.whitehouse.gov>) designed to create more opportunities for people with disabilities to be active citizens. The transportation component of the initiative is \$145 million. Funding guidelines for the initiative are not yet available.

### **Director's Report:**

**Pam Piering** recently returned from an N4A Conference in San Antonio. Her term as a director of n4a has been extended an additional year, and she is now Chair of the Research and Policy Committee, which has just completed nine issue papers that give an overview of n4a policies.

Last April, at the n4a Advocacy in Action Training, AC members attending the training requested an opportunity to meet with other AC members across the state. In response to that request, W4A has prepared a survey that will be used for planning a statewide Advisory Council Conference. The conference will take place in the fall of 2003 (the day after the Senior Lobby Conference). There will be a reception in the evening and a half-day conference the following day. **Peggy O'Brien-Murphy** will send these surveys out next week. Please return them asap, as we need feedback on what kinds of things you would like to see happen.

Pam and **Karen Sluiter** had the opportunity to brief the City Council Human Services Committee on the ADS Area Plan. Karen spoke to committee about family caregiver issues and the work of the AC. Pam spoke of two key ordinances. The first ordinance provides City approval for ADS to accept and spend \$590,000 distributed by the Attorney General's Office (from a vitamin settlement) for the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program. Last year we started a pilot program with Senior Services Meals on Wheels to include fresh fruits and vegetables with home delivered meals for low-income seniors. We will be expanding the program to a broader area in the county, then expand it statewide via other Area Agencies on Aging. (**Gabe Cohen** commented that 68 % of adults over 65 are not eating 5 fruits and vegetables a day. He urged AC members to contact legislators at home before Congress reconvenes and let them know how important this program is. The second ordinance will set up a special process allowing employees to contribute Amy Wong Fund through the Combined Charities Campaign. The Amy Wong Fund provides help to low-income case management clients who need one-time or short-term assistance but have no where to turn because they don't qualify for public funding.

**Outreach & Advocacy:** **Gabe Cohen** reported that the Legislative Forum on Prescription Drugs is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 am at the New Holly Community Center. We have 16 co-sponsors.

Co-Chair, **Cleo Corcoran** reported on the committee's discussion about the Outreach component of O&A. The purpose of advocacy and outreach is education and information with the Outreach section being the foundation for Advocacy. With this in mind, the committee suggested two major areas the AC should promote: 1) the AC itself, and 2) informing and educating the community about major issues that affect seniors and those with disabilities. The committee decided to put together an action plan on what it would require, in terms of time and energy, to have a monthly news release. They also suggest developing an AC pamphlet on who we are, what we do, and how we're appointed. This pamphlet would be useful when we meet with groups or with legislators, or for general distribution. **Larry Verhei** said he would like to use it at Health Care Fairs and/or other promotional events.

**Lisa Yeager** reported on the King County Alliance of Human Services (a coalition of human service organizations and advocacy groups). County Executive Sims has stated that Human Services funding will be reduced in the county by 50% in 2003 and 100% in 2004. Lisa said the impacts will be great - Visiting Nurse will be eliminated, Community Health, Adult Day Health, Senior Centers will be heavily impacted. The cuts to human services will have a far-reaching effect on seniors in King County. Lisa handed out information on

the cuts and asked AC members to contact their County Councilmembers and let them know how these cuts will impact people in the county. **Marc Avni** said County Councilmember Reichbauer is polling public opinion regarding costs of the Ridgeway defense/prosecution in light of the proposed cuts to human services.

**Planning & Allocations:** **Lee Gaylor** reported in **Suzanne Wiley's** absence and gave a brief background on the allocation of discretionary funds. He said it is expected that discretionary funds will be decreased in 2003 somewhere within a range of \$200,000 to \$760,000. We will not know the funding situation until spring of next year. Because of the uncertainty and timing of reductions, the ADS Sponsors have tentatively decided to: 1) keep the allocations for 2003 at the same level as 2002, 2) adopt a set of criteria for determining reductions to service areas and, 3) apply criteria when revenue information becomes available in the Spring of 2003.

This decision process will include the public review, which immediately follows this AC meeting. On August 21, 2002, the Sponsors will make a final decision on the funding reduction criteria.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 2:00 PM

PUBLIC COMMENT ON 2003 PRELIMINARY DISCRETIONARY ALLOCATIONS BEGAN AT 2:05 PM

**Next Meeting:**

**Note: Site Visit**

September 13, 2002, 11:30 am - 1:30 PM

Laotian/Hmong Nutrition Program

Vietnamese Presbyterian Church

6721 51<sup>st</sup> Ave S., Seattle,

For information call 206/684-0490

Suzanne Wiley, Secretary-Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_